

**Veterans Services Foundations Meeting
October 16, 2003
Virginia War Memorial
11:00 A.M – 2:20 P.M.**

Board Members Attending:

Lydia Dudley, Colonel Leroy Gross, John Hanson, Major General Frederick Leigh,
Raymond Smoot, Gilmer Minor

Board Members Absent:

Margaret Eure, Major General Donald Gardner

Additional Persons Present:

Jon Mangis, Commissioner of Veterans Services
Bernie Henderson, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth
Don Ferguson, Assistant Attorney General
Bert Boyd, Chief Deputy Commissioner of Veterans Services
Dr. Sheryl Bailey, Deputy Secretary of Administration

Call to Order:

Commissioner Jon Mangis officially called the meeting to order and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Election of Officers:

Commissioner Mangis announced that members of the board were to vote on who would be Chairman and Vice Chairman of the board. He asked John Hanson to form a nominating committee so that elections could be held at the next meeting.

Update of Governor's Executive Order 40:

Dr. Sheryl Bailey, Deputy Secretary of Administration welcomed committee members. Landmark legislation created the departments as a single agency consolidating veterans services under one umbrella organization and realigning the appointed veterans boards to improve access, service deliver and efficiency of operations. She spoke on the ground breaking for the Suffolk cemetery. Veterans were over 780,000 in the last census. Virginia has six of the top ten localities nationwide with significant veteran population. She stated the commissioner is here to make certain the structure and management for Veterans in Virginia are met. Executive Order 40 was discussed.

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EO 40 directed all state agencies to “identify opportunities for improving services to veterans and to make and implement appropriate changes.” All agencies were directed to report on their progress on this directive to the Secretary of Administration by June 30, 2003. An EO 40 summary report was distributed and discussed. (See Attachment). Dr. Bailey reported that Executive Order 40 has had a significant impact on the services offered to veterans by the Commonwealth’s agencies. For the first time, the array of services currently offered by 15 agencies has been documented in one place.

The availability of these services can now be more effectively communicated to the veteran community, thereby enhancing access to these useful services. Additionally, 39% of the reporting agencies (31) are expanding services to veterans as a result of Executive Order 40. The majority of these agencies did not previously provide direct or unique services to veterans.

Furthermore, another 28% of the reporting agencies (22) have requested additional assistance or indicated a willingness to partner with DVS to enhance services to veterans. These potential partnerships provide fertile ground for additional service expansions in the future.

Dr. Bailey strongly recommended that people take advantage of variety of existing services to veterans. She also reported that the additional directives of Executive Order 40 are all being pursued currently with additional reporting requirements in October and December. No questions were raised.

Duties and Responsibilities of Veterans Services Foundation:

Don Ferguson, Assistant Attorney General, discussed briefly the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and the Virginia Conflict of Interest Act. Mr. Ferguson will draw up a synopsis of each act and send a copy to committee members for their notebooks.

Briefing on the Department of Veterans Services:

Mr. Boyd welcomed the committee and briefed them on the Department of Veterans Services, the Joint Leadership Council and the Foundation, which merged as of July 1st. A final draft of Mr. Boyd’s report will be provided to all members of the committee at a later date. The budget cut in 2003 did not affect the amount or length of service to the veterans who needed assistance. Mr. Boyd stated there is a need for training of the claims staff as well as the field offices. Greater enhancement should be created so that veterans and other agencies can better access veterans’ information. The Veterans Supermarket of Veteran’s Benefits will help make veterans aware of Executive Order 40.

The Virginia Veterans Care Center in Roanoke with 240 beds. It provides nursing home long-term care and domiciliary care. Next week’s report will show the revenue and expenditures, which are the key issues Commissioner Mangis and Deputy Commissioner

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Boyd are focusing on. The cemetery in Amelia currently has 805 buried veterans. The goal of Suffolk is to offer a better location for burial. One main goal is to keep the grounds looking superior. General fund money was used to help pay for the cemetery, and opening is scheduled for November 2004.

Remarks: Commissioner Mangis:

Commissioner Mangis spoke of his background and experiences with the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs.

Roundtable Discussion:

The emphasis of the Foundation is to develop a stable and strategic plan for fund raising. Discussion centered on how funds could be raised and the management of the funds.

Public Comment Period:

None

Council Meet Schedule:

Next meeting will be held Thursday, November 20, 2003 at 11:00 A.M. location to be announced.

Adjournment: